

important correlation between human and divine experience, but it obscures divine-human relationship.

Beyond the issue of one's entry vantage point, the book seems to be flawed in other ways. In Roy's attempt to limit the scope of the discussion, he does not discuss the two subjects, human free will and how God foreknows. The debate on divine foreknowledge has always been the dilemma of reconciling divine foreknowledge with contingent free will. However, Roy takes an approach that allows him to contribute to the debate without fully exploring the precise nature of human freedom. Consequently, he is able to assume that all the sides of the debate can affirm divine exhaustive foreknowledge irrespective of the definition of freedom one upholds, but the approach is limited in two ways. First, it gives inequitable treatment to his opponents' open-theist proposition. Second, it does not address the issue at hand.

Relating to this weakness is the relationship between divine foreknowledge and determinism. The author asserts that it does not matter whether divine foreknowledge is the result of divine determination or vice versa; the reality is that the Scriptures support exhaustive divine foreknowledge. His remark neglects the fact that the various approaches to reconcile divine foreknowledge and contingent freedom came about because of the relationship one attributes to divine foreknowledge and determinism. Calvinism is different from Arminianism because Calvinists believe divine foreknowledge is grounded in divine determinism and Arminians assert that divine determinism results from divine foreknowledge. For one thing, Roy's opponents hold that God's predestined activities establish the content of his foreknowledge; therefore, God does not know the future free decisions of self-determined beings. As a result, to comprehensively critique biblical arguments of the open theists' proposal or even biblically prove that the Bible teaches divine exhaustive foreknowledge, there is the need to properly articulate and distinguish between divine determinism and foreknowledge.

In spite of certain deficiencies, this book remains a comprehensive biblical work and an important contribution to the plethora of works on divine foreknowledge. Often materials on divine foreknowledge are sophisticated and difficult to read, but Roy's approach is interesting and easily readable. It has extensive footnotes, bibliography, and a scriptural index, which indicates extensive research on the subject. The book is a valuable tool for pastors, teachers, and students who are embarking on a study of the doctrine of God.

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Sklar, Jay. *Sin, Impurity, Sacrifice, Atonement: The Priestly Conceptions*. Hebrew Bible Monographs 2. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005. xi + 212 pp. Hardcover, \$85.00.

*Impurity, Sacrifice, Atonement: The Priestly Conceptions* is a revised Ph.D. dissertation, submitted to the University of Gloucestershire in Cheltenham, England (advisor Gordon Wenham), that examines the conceptual and synchronic levels with the idea of כֶּסֶר in the Priestly texts of the Hebrew Bible. Sklar is presently Assistant Professor of Old Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, and this publication marks an important and systematic contribution to the highly relevant question of the way in which atonement worked in the conceptual world of the Hebrew Bible.

The volume is divided into four parts, focusing on כֶּסֶר in the context of sin (part 1, chaps. 1-3), כֶּסֶר in the contexts of impurity (part 2, chap. 4), the interaction and connection between sin, impurity, and כֶּסֶר (part 3, chap. 5), and the role of blood in the

context of the כִּפּוּר (part 4, chap. 6). The study includes a helpful introduction that reviews the different approaches to כִּפּוּר in general (1-8), as well as a conclusion (183-187) and appendix, "כִּפּוּר and Its Syntagmatic Relations in the Priestly Literature" (188-193). A representative (though not comprehensive) bibliography (194-199) and two indices (textual references and cited authors, 194-212) conclude the volume.

Sklar's point of departure for his study is the fact that כִּפּוּר sacrifices address sin in some instances, but in others deal with impurities. He wonders what the relationship between atonement and purification is (1-8). He suggests that "since both inadvertent sin and major impurity endanger (requiring ransom) and pollute (requiring purgation), sacrificial atonement must both ransom and cleanse. The verb used to describe this dual event is the כִּפּוּר, and the power of the כִּפּוּר-rite to accomplish both is due to the lifeblood of the animal" (187). In between the description of the problem and a possible solution, Sklar has included a considerable amount of careful reasoning that challenges those interested in the mechanics and the underlying theology of the Israelite sacrificial system.

After having established that only unintentional sins are "atonable" (11-43), Sklar seeks to define the key term כִּפּוּר and provides a helpful and thorough review of the literature on the subject. The author uses a concept-oriented as well as a field-oriented semantic approach. He seems aware of the possible dangers of the former (48), even though he refers several times to the "basic meaning" or "basic sense" of the term, which is reminiscent of the "root meaning," a concept dear to earlier lexicographers and convincingly "deconstructed" by James Barr (*The Semantics of Biblical Language* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961]; and idem, "Etymology and the Old Testament," in *Language and Meaning: Studies in Hebrew Language and Biblical Exegesis: Papers Read at the Joint British-Dutch Old Testament Conference Held at London, 1973*, ed. A. S. van der Woude, Oudtestamentische Studiën 19 [Leiden: Brill, 1974], 1-28). Sklar argues that the concept-oriented approach suggests that "כִּפּוּר is a legally or ethically legitimate payment that delivers a guilty party from a just punishment" (60). Using the field-oriented approach, the author pays close attention to the interaction of כִּפּוּר with similar terms belonging to the same semantic field (see 66-67). Following this section, Sklar interacts with important discussions of the term כִּפּוּר, including Janowski, Herrmann, Lang, and Schenker. He dedicates considerable space to interact and critique Schenker's detailed study of the term and argues against an exclusive understanding of כִּפּוּר as "appeasement" (72-76). Sklar appreciates Brichtho's suggestion of translating כִּפּוּר as "composition" (76-77), even though it has some weaknesses due to its disuse in modern English (and thus the lack of understanding).

In the following two chapters, the author carefully examines the conceptual use of the verb כִּפּוּר in contexts of sin and impurity. Concerning the former, Sklar argues that due to its proximity to סָלַח ("forgive") and נָשָׂא עֲוֹן ("bear punishment"), the כִּפּוּר-rite suggests the payment of a כִּפּוּר on behalf of the guilty party (101). Along the way, the author again notes the contaminating force of sin and suggests at the end of chapter 4 that the close links between כִּפּוּר and חֲטָא and קִרְשׁ suggest that the idea of "affecting purgation" involved the two elements of purification (of the tabernacle and its *sancta*), as well as ransoming. This notion is further developed in chapter 5, where Sklar expresses some dissatisfaction with the distinction between ritual and moral impurity that some scholars have suggested. Basing his method on the work of David Wright, he argues that a further distinction between major and minor ritual impurities and between inadvertent and intentional moral impurities would be more helpful, underlining the important similarities between major impurities and inadvertent sins (and their resolution), which thereby provides a link between sin and impurity. This link is further

developed in chapter 6 (163-182), where blood is argued to be an important element in the sacrificial system that links the purification and ransom aspects of the *kipper*-rite.

Sklar has made a good case for linking sin and impurity. He argues precisely, and his exegetical discussion is tight and to the point. The inclusion of helpful figures, tables, and concise summaries of each section makes this volume an easy one to follow. His use of the term "priestly" is unfortunate, however, since the term is often associated with a hypothetical source of the Pentateuch that, even though most scholars would argue that the basic presuppositions of source-critical work need reconsideration, still enjoys a prominent place in Pentateuch scholarship. Sklar clarifies that he uses the term in a general way to refer to texts that describe the cult of ancient Israel (ix). Further, he performs a synchronic reading of the biblical text. Still, his brief disclaimer in the preface for the use of the term "priestly" may be overlooked and lead to terminological confusion. Since no scholar is able to keep abreast on all relevant literature, I have included a list of publications (primarily from the German-speaking part of the world) that should be interacted with in Sklar's work: Christian Eberhart, *Studien zur Bedeutung der Opfer im Alten Testament: Die Signifikanz von Blut- und Verbrennungsriten im kultischen Rahmen*, WMANT 94 (Neukirchen-Vlyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2002); Rainer Albertz, "עֲוֹן: Kultische Sühne und politische und gesellschaftliche Versöhnung," in *Kult, Konflikt und Versöhnung: Beiträge zur kultischen Sühne in religiösen, sozialen und politischen Auseinandersetzungen des antiken Mittelmeerraumes*, ed. Rainer Albertz, AOAT 285 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2001), 135-149; and Benedikt Jürgens, *Heiligkeit und Versöhnung: Levitikus 16 in seinem literarischen Kontext*, Herders Biblische Studien 28 (Freiburg: Herder Verlag, 2001). I would have also liked to see Sklar's reaction to Kiuchi's recent innovative discussion of the root חטא (and חטאת) in Lev 4-5, which appeared two years prior to Sklar's volume (cf. Nobuyoshi Kiuchi, *A Study of Ḥṭā' and Ḥṭā't in Leviticus 4-5*, FAT 2. Reihe 2 [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003]). Due to the overlapping of publication schedules, Sklar did not interact with the important study by Roy E. Gane (*Cult and Character: Purification Offerings, Day of Atonement, and Theodicy* [Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005], esp. chaps. 6-8, 12-13, which convincingly argue that purification [or purgation] of the sanctuary and its *sancta* is only in view during the ritual of ordination and consecration of the sanctuary and its personnel [Lev 8] and on the Day of Atonement [Lev 16], while all other purification offerings removed nondefiant sins and severe impurities only from the one offering, the sacrifice).

Sklar's careful contribution has underlined the growing realization that the Israelite cultic system was not of a random nature and was comprised of many individual strands and often-conflicting sources, but that one can note a coherent total that linked purity concerns with legal elements. Sin was not just a trifle or a personal problem, but affected the individual, the total community, and the physical environment of the Israelites. This holistic perspective can also be observed in Sklar's work and suggests a significant move away from text-layer-oriented research in the Pentateuch to conceptual work that goes beyond the realms of theology or a history of religion. A clear indication of this renaissance in ritual and cultic studies is that, beginning at the Annual Meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature in 2007 in San Diego, two new consultations dealing with the larger issues pointed to in Sklar's important contribution began their work (i.e., the "Sacrifice, Cult, and Atonement" and the "Ritual in the Biblical World" consultations).

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